



## Section 4

# WORKING WITH MEDIA

Every story about children's health insurance reported in the media offers the opportunity to educate and inform families about how to obtain and manage health insurance for their children. Media coverage of events, enrollment systems or local success stories will greatly expand the reach and impact of your efforts. State and local media are interested in reporting what is happening in their own communities, and they rely on tips and information from organizations on the front lines.

You may be contacted by the media, or you may want to proactively approach them with a story or news item to cover. The following information provides tips and ideas on how to manage interactions with the media. When working with the media, you may also consider working with the public affairs/media liaison within your State Medicaid agency or State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) office. Most liaisons have relationships with several media outlets in your State.

If your organization works infrequently with the media, the following information will provide you with solid tips to conduct media outreach. If you work with the media on a regular basis, the information in this section will likely supplement your current knowledge and experience. You should select elements that best fit your campaign goals.

## 4.1 Reacting to a Media Inquiry

The media may contact your organization as a State or local expert about a story lead or idea related to children's health insurance. There are some things you can do in preparation for potential requests.

### Prepare for Media Inquiries

#### Choose the Right Spokesperson

Your spokesperson is the voice and face of your organization. To ensure consistency of message and image, your organization should designate one or two individuals as its primary media spokesperson(s). The spokesperson should be trained to answer questions about children's health insurance information and the efforts your organization is undertaking in the local community.

#### Train Your Spokesperson

When working with media, your spokesperson should assume that all information provided to a reporter from the time he or she picks up the phone or walks into the interview will be used. There is no such thing as "off the record." Your spokesperson should keep your organization's objective and core messages in the forefront of his or her mind and consider repeating key points. With practice a spokesperson can learn how to promote your organization and your story effectively and with confidence. Your spokesperson should go through an initial training once identified. When

possible, it is recommended to conduct a “mock” interview immediately prior to a scheduled interview to address the specific content of the interview.

### Select a Media Liaison

When a reporter requests information or an interview, the person designated to handle media inquiries should obtain the following information: caller’s name, title, affiliation, contact information and deadline for conducting the interview. Your media liaison should find out if the reporter wants a telephone or in-person interview and ask about medium (print, online, television, radio) and subject. If possible, the media liaison should ask the reporter to prepare questions in advance of the interview and share them with you for review. Everyone in your organization should know who is assigned to handle press, and any incoming media inquiries should be directed to that person.

The following suggestions will help you prepare your spokesperson for an interview.

MEDIA INTERVIEW SUGGESTIONS	
<b>View Interviews as Opportunities</b>	Interviews are opportunities to deliver a story to an audience. You and the reporter have jobs to do when an interview is arranged. The reporter’s job is to gather information and get a story. Your job is to give the reporter your key messages.
<b>Learn Key Messages and Stay on Them</b>	Every campaign has essential key messages that must be conveyed to the public (see Section 1). The spokesperson should speak from prepared messaging without deviation. Don’t worry about being able to tackle every aspect of the issue. Have a select number of messages your spokesperson is comfortable with (four to five) and keep coming back to them.
<b>Consider Your Audience</b>	A reporter is a conduit to your target audience. When conducting an interview, a spokesperson should always speak the audience’s language. This means using clear and simple language that is free of jargon and abbreviations. The inclusion of examples, especially those that are local and relevant to your target audience, will help round out the story.
<b>Think Like a Reporter</b>	Often reporters come to an interview with the story already written in their heads. They may be looking to you to provide a single quote that will crystallize the issue. Your challenge is to make sure the reporter has the right story and to provide them lively quotes that capture the messages you want to deliver. Regardless of the reporter’s focus, make sure you share YOUR message.
<b>Anticipate Difficult Questions</b>	Use negative questions as an opportunity to deliver positive messages. Anticipate hard questions that raise explosive issues, and develop responses to help prepare your spokesperson. Preparation will help your spokesperson address tough questions and move on.

<b>Pivot Back to Your Message</b>	While answering tough questions is often necessary, you can also use those questions as an opportunity to “pivot,” or redirect, back to your key message. By shifting the conversation back to what you want to talk about, you can keep the interview focused on what really matters: getting the word out about children’s health insurance programs.
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### **Gather Key Statistics and Information**

Having fact sheets, statistics, local success stories and any other pertinent information readily available will allow your spokesperson to easily access useful information. Write down specific examples and localized anecdotal information that would be relevant to most inquiries regarding children’s health insurance in advance of any discussions. Also have available basic information about eligibility for CHIP and/or Medicaid in your State.

## **Respond to Incoming Media Calls**

### **Respond Promptly to the Reporter**

It is critical to respond to media requests in a timely manner. Reporters will find other sources for children’s health insurance information if they are unable to reach you, meaning you miss an opportunity to get your message into the story. If a reporter calls with questions that are not within your organization’s expertise, tell them you are not qualified to give a response and direct them to someone who can.

### **Prepare for the Interview**

The amount of preparation time you have depends heavily on the reporter’s deadline. Ideally, you will know about the interview several hours or days in advance. Gather relevant information, including any previous coverage on the topic, and conduct a mock interview with your spokesperson. Even if a reporter’s deadline is immediate, ask if you may call the reporter back in five minutes. That way you have a moment to gather any information you want to have readily available. Develop a briefing document that contain all pertinent interview details, key talking points, statistics and background on the journalist.

### **Know Your Limitations**

Your organization is not expected to be an expert on everything related to children’s health. If a reporter asks for information you cannot provide – tell them. Directing the reporter to the appropriate source will go a long way in cultivating a relationship with that reporter. Work with your State Medicaid agency or CHIP office public affairs officer to help reporters secure information that would be available only through the State.



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### **“Ready to roll, in five, four, three, two...”** **Helpful Tips for Preparing for Television Interviews**

Conducting an interview with a reporter often means you will be on the phone. Your notes can be close by for reference, and things like body language and eye contact are not a concern. However, the dynamic changes in a television interview, and even when simply meeting a reporter in person. When conducting a television interview, keep the following tips in mind:

- ☒ Maintain eye contact with the reporter during the interview. Don’t look into the camera, unless specifically instructed to do so by the reporter or producer.
- ☒ If you’re doing a live television interview, wait for the “all clear” signal before getting up. In many cases, the television camera is still rolling after the interview is concluded.
- ☒ Be aware that microphones pick up sounds even from a great distance.
- ☒ When dressing for an interview, avoid busy patterns and jewelry that could be distracting or hit the microphone. The safest color to wear on TV is blue.
- ☒ Be aware of your body language during the course of an interview. Body language can either accentuate or undermine your message.
- ☒ Keep your hands free to gesture. Gesturing helps you emphasize key points and is likely how you naturally hold a conversation.

## **4.2 Proactively Engaging the Media**

Whether you want to establish contacts at local media outlets or you have a specific story to tell, the following information will help you develop your story and your relationships with the media.

### **What’s Your Story?**

There are a variety of stories and angles the media may relate to children’s health insurance. Before you contact a reporter, clearly identify your approach, or “pitch.”

- Know how your story ties to the local community and affects the readers or viewers the reporter reaches.
- Recognize the news value of the story. Does your idea tie into a specific date or event or is it a piece that can run at any time?
- Identify facts, statistics or personal stories that support your pitch.

- Suggest visuals the reporter could use, materials to tape if you are pitching a television reporter (e.g., a family willing to be interviewed, an event, etc.) or a photo from a recent enrollment event for a print reporter.

### Baltimore HealthCare Access Media Push

Baltimore HealthCare Access, Inc. (BHCA), a quasi-public agency of the Baltimore City Health Department, used alternative media to alert city residents about access to no or low-cost health insurance plans, including Maryland's Children's Health Program. In 2009, BHCA placed 39-foot bandage-themed ads, which stated "We'll Cover You," in several Baltimore neighborhoods to attract attendees to their Healthy Summer Kickoff Health Fairs. Residents could attend the fairs and learn about Maryland's no and low-cost health insurance programs. In addition to the bandage ads, BHCA also blanketed homes in targeted neighborhoods with bandage-shaped door hangers to help raise awareness about access to the State's health insurance plans.

**Source:** [www.baltimorehealth.org/press/2009\\_05\\_21.BHCA.pdf](http://www.baltimorehealth.org/press/2009_05_21.BHCA.pdf)

### STORY IDEAS

<b>Local Events You Are Sponsoring/Participating In</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment events</li> <li>• Speaking engagements</li> <li>• Trainings</li> <li>• Press conferences</li> </ul>
<b>Special Observances or Key Dates to Which Children's Health Insurance Can Be Linked</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Children's Dental Health Month (February)</li> <li>• One-year anniversary of President Barack Obama signing the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (February 18)</li> <li>• National Minority Health Awareness Month (April)</li> <li>• National Healthy Kids Day (April 18)</li> <li>• Mother's Day (May)</li> <li>• Beginning of summer (June/July)</li> <li>• Back-to-School (August/September)</li> <li>• Child Health Day (October 5)</li> <li>• Holiday season and family gatherings (November/December)</li> <li>• Make yourself available during current events/unplanned events</li> </ul>
<b>Definition of Children's Health Insurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHIP/Medicaid definitions, how the two programs differ, who is eligible, how to apply and other critical aspects of the programs</li> <li>• Benefits CHIP and Medicaid have to offer including regular check-ups, dental care, immunizations and prescription drugs</li> <li>• Local statistics and information about enrollment in your community and local trends and insights</li> </ul>

<b>Benefits of Children's Health Insurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile story: A family with a child enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid and the difference it has made for the family</li> <li>• The importance of children's health insurance to the community (e.g., fewer trips to the emergency room, less financial strain on working families, fewer sick days from school)</li> </ul>
<b>Importance of Children's Health Insurance Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention rates for CHIP and Medicaid in your region</li> <li>• The importance of keeping children enrolled in the programs and the effects on those who have not retained coverage</li> </ul>
<b>CHIP and Medicaid by Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The benefits CHIP and Medicaid offer to pregnant women</li> <li>• CHIP and Medicaid benefits for working families in the current economy</li> <li>• Unique needs of minority populations</li> </ul>

## Build a Media List

A comprehensive media list is an invaluable tool when conducting media outreach. At minimum, your media list should include the names of local media outlets (TV stations, newspapers, magazines, radio stations) and the name, title and contact information (phone, e-mail address, fax number) for specific individuals within each organization. You should also include a section for notes, including the reporter's preferred method of contact, publication deadlines and related stories previously covered to aid future outreach efforts.

Below are tips to begin creating your media list. Remember to include smaller and targeted media outlets such as local cable access TV stations, community newspapers, ethnic print/radio/online outlets, local parenting/family magazines and community Web sites.

- Compile the names and contact information of any reporters/media outlets your organization has worked with in the past.
- Check phone directories for listings of TV and radio stations, local daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. Search media outlet Web sites and online archives, if available, to find names of reporters covering children's health issues. You can also call the main number for newspapers and TV stations and ask the operator for assistance.
- Use the U.S. Newspaper List Web site at [www.usnpl.com](http://www.usnpl.com) to identify papers in your area.
- Add local offices/bureaus of national media organizations, typically located in State capitals or large cities. Wire services like the Associated Press, Reuters and the Scripps Howard News Service distribute articles to local newspapers. National and State-based radio and television networks also provide stories to local affiliates.

POTENTIAL MEDIA CONTACTS	
<b>Print</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporters covering health and children/family issues</li> <li>• Health, lifestyle, editorial, metro desk and managing editors</li> <li>• Community columnists</li> <li>• Writers for community event and calendar pages</li> </ul>
<b>Television</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment desk and planning editors</li> <li>• News producers</li> <li>• Morning show and community program producers</li> <li>• Health, lifestyle and family reporters and on-air personalities</li> </ul>
<b>Radio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• News directors</li> <li>• Assignment desk editors</li> <li>• Public service directors</li> <li>• Reporters and on-air personalities</li> </ul>
<b>Online</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• News editors</li> <li>• Reporters</li> <li>• Health, family and lifestyle bloggers</li> </ul>

## Choose Appropriate Outlets for Your Story

You will likely not pitch every story to every reporter on your media list. Review your media list closely to determine which reporters are appropriate to contact for each story. For example, a feature reporter will likely be more interested in a family profile piece than a news reporter; a business reporter may be more apt than a health reporter to cover a story about how the number of work days a parent misses due to a child's illness impacts productivity and a company's bottom line.

## Cultivate Relationships with Target Media Outlets

Once you have your media list and story ideas, establish relationships with local media. Encourage them to use you and your organization as a resource for upcoming stories and ask them if you can continue sending information about news and/or upcoming events. At the beginning of your relationship, the media outlet may not necessarily quote your organization in a story but may ask your organization to provide data about children's health insurance. Over time, this relationship will develop, allowing your organization to become a trusted source on children's health insurance. You can initiate these relationships by:

- Sending an e-mail introducing yourself and briefly describing what expertise your organization can offer. (You may want to refer to a story the outlet recently completed to show you follow and to explain why you thought the outlet would be a good point of contact.)
- Providing key media contacts with press kits containing a children's health insurance backgrounder, related media materials and your business card so they can file the information for later use.
- Arranging background briefings/meetings with key reporters and editors.





- Contacting the public service director at a local radio station and encouraging the station to do “live reads” of the public service announcement (PSA) scripts included in this toolkit (see Section 2).

### Conducting Outreach to Ethnic Media Outlets

Media preferences differ among consumers. Below are a few strategies you can utilize to create culturally meaningful outreach to key demographic groups that may reside in your State or community.

- **African American:** Media preference data indicates 60% of the African American community listens to urban radio. Based on this information, consider conducting outreach to urban radio stations in your area. Occasions when families come together are typically important for the African American community, so leverage key moments in time, such as Thanksgiving in November and Mother’s Day in May, to encourage conversation about children’s health insurance through media stories. If possible, offer an African American spokesperson for interviews when working with African American outlets.
- **Hispanic:** Providing information in-language is important, so whenever possible, offer a spokesperson who is Spanish-speaking and competent in Spanish culture for interviews, especially for TV and radio. Data show that 58% of Hispanic consumers listen to Hispanic radio, so when building your media list, include these stations on your list. If you do not have a Hispanic spokesperson, a drop-in article (see Sample F) is frequently used by Hispanic print outlets. Also consider distributing Spanish “live-read” radio PSA scripts to local Hispanic stations to be read on-air.
- **Asian American/Pacific Islander:** Thirty percent of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders indicate their most trusted news source is the Internet. Based on this information, include Asian American/Pacific Islander Web sites in your outreach to post Web banners and publish a drop-in article. Data also show print media are also trusted sources. Therefore, conduct outreach to Asian American publications in your area. And, leverage key moments in time, such as Lunar New Year in February and Asian Pacific Heritage Month in May, and provide relevant story angles to Asian American publications.
- **American Indian/Alaska Native:** Media preference data indicate that American Indians/Alaska Natives are heavy consumers of radio. Based on this information, consider reaching out to radio stations, including outlets that broadcast over the Internet, that target this community. If specific media outlets are not an option in your area, consider contacting chapter houses on local reservations to see if they are willing to display children’s health insurance information.





## Manage Inaccurate Information

As you monitor the news to track any successes from your outreach efforts, it is likely you may uncover stories that contain inaccurate information. Follow these tips to ensure that reporters have balanced, factual information:

- Reach out to reporters to bring any incorrect information to their attention. Offer an opportunity to speak with your spokesperson to showcase your organization's point-of-view.
- If possible, incorporate personal stories to help counter or balance any incorrect information. Organizations often use statistics to support an argument, assuming readers will make decisions based on facts. However, often people form opinions based on emotions and values, and the best way to communicate values and emotions is by telling a short personal story.
- If the coverage is in print, consider submitting a letter to the editor the day the article hits. The letter should be 150 to 200 words, short and to the point and contain any important key messages your organization wishes to get across.

## 4.3 Developing Media Materials

### Drafting a Press Release

A press release is the most common way to communicate news to the media. It provides background information, quotes from your organization's spokespeople or local children's health advocates and other relevant children's health insurance information.

Press releases are used to assist media outlets in building stories. In some cases, an outlet may take the information you provide and use it to build its story. Other times, a release may prompt a reporter to want to learn more information or conduct an interview. The press release presents the story you want to tell. Generally, every press release includes the following information:

- Contact information (name, organization, phone number, e-mail address) at the top of the release
- An introductory paragraph including date and city that answers basic questions about your announcement – who, what, when, where and why
- A quote from your organization's spokesperson or a respected third party
- Supporting background information about your news or announcement
- Boilerplate information at the bottom of the press release about your organization

You will want to send out the release to your media list via e-mail or fax. You may also want to consider using a wire service such as PR Newswire or US Newswire to distribute your release.

See Sample B for a sample press release.



## Drafting a Media Advisory

A media advisory is a one-page document announcing an upcoming event, speech or other specific development to the media. Think of it as an invitation that provides:

- What – Background information on the press conference, event or announcement
- Who – Information on who is participating in the press conference, event or announcement
- When – Detailed information on when the event or announcement is taking place
- Where – Location of the press conference, event or announcement
- Contact – Information on who to contact for more information or to set-up an interview
- Background – Brief information that provides background on the event

A media advisory should be distributed several days to a week prior to the event or opportunity. This will give reporters enough time to get it on their schedules, conduct background research and call you for more information. It is often helpful to distribute the advisory again on the day of the announcement to remind everyone that it is taking place that day. Also be sure to fax and e-mail the advisory to wire service “daybooks,” which are the event calendars reporters use to plan their day.

See Sample C for a sample media advisory.

## Drafting a Pitch Script

A pitch script outlines key points you need to cover to capture a reporter’s attention and pique his or her interest to write a story on children’s health insurance. A pitch script should include the same information included in the media advisory. You can use the pitch script to drive your conversation with reporters on the phone before or after alerting them about an upcoming event.

Often you only have 30 to 60 seconds to make your pitch, so you must use that time wisely. Once your pitch is written, practice it aloud several times before making a call. You may also want to practice your pitch with a colleague.

See Sample D for a sample pitch script.

## Drafting a Drop-In Article

A drop-in article is a news story written for insertion into regional and community newspapers. These articles may also be provided to local organizations to place in their newsletters or on their Web sites. Regional and community newspapers tend to have much smaller staffs, so drop-in articles are typically used to supplement staff-written stories or to fill soft news sections of the paper.

Target various outlets and organizations to place your drop-in article. Keep in mind, the more places you distribute the drop-in article, the more placements you will secure. The following is a list of possible places to include your drop-in article:

- School and PTA newsletters
- Faith-based organization publications
- Partner publications, listservs or e-blasts
- Local hospital publications

See Samples E and F for sample drop-in articles in English and Spanish.

### **Drafting a Letter to the Editor**

A letter to the editor is an article written for and sent to a newspaper or magazine that presents an organization's position, makes a correction or responds to a previously written story or letter. Print publications generally prefer letters to be 150 to 200 words in length. Before publishing a letter to the editor, newspapers confirm the author's approval of content of the letter by placing a phone call. It is important to note that print publications reserve the right to omit parts of the content submitted in a letter to the editor.

A letter to the editor on a specific topic has a better chance of being published if more than one person or a group writes about the issue. This is a good time to rally your partners and ask them to write to the paper as well; each letter, however, should be individually drafted. Form letters are usually ignored.

See Samples G and H for sample letter to the editors in English and Spanish.

### **Drafting a Media Statement**

A media statement provides an organization's position on a news story or issue along with facts or evidence supporting your organization's point-of-view. A media statement, unlike a press release, should be structured so that you would be comfortable if a reporter were to include any sentence of the statement in an article. It should be distributed to reporters and editors at local media outlets that cover the specific beat or topic related to the statement. A statement should be released within 12 to 24 hours of the news development. It is critical that the statement is timely in order to be effective and spark coverage. When writing a media statement:

- Keep your target audience top of mind
- Make it concise
- Stick to the point
- Avoid excessive language
- Support your position with facts

See Sample I for a sample media statement.



## Reaching Out to Editorial Boards

Pieces written by the editorial board of a newspaper often carry a unique weight in the community, especially when they are intended to endorse a position or promote an event. If your organization wants an editorial piece published about children's health insurance, consider hosting an editorial board briefing with a local print publication. Your spokesperson should meet with one or more key editors from the publication, as well as reporters who typically cover the issue. Often editorial board briefings result in the paper writing an editorial piece about the issue – this may happen immediately or it could occur at a later time, perhaps on the heels of related news about children's health. To set up an editorial board briefing, contact the publication's editorial page editor or an editorial reporter.

## Conducting a News Conference

If your organization has a major event or an important children's health insurance announcement, consider hosting a news conference. News conferences are generally held to allow reporters to receive breaking news, get their questions answered immediately, and have the opportunity to talk to key players directly. Consider the following steps when planning an event of this nature.

- **Location and Time:** Aim for hosting your news conference in a well-known location easily accessible to members of the media. Consider having the event at a local hotel, community center, school, a State or local government facility (State Capitol building, mayor's office, etc.) or a press club. Also, schedule the conference for a day and time convenient to reporters' deadlines – generally in the morning around 10 a.m. or 11 a.m.
- **Invitation List:** Determine who you want to attend the news conference and prepare an invitation list with contact information. Consider inviting compelling spokespeople, stakeholders, local partners and members of the media. To alert the media, send out a media advisory (see Sample C).
- **Visuals:** A podium sign, backdrop or other signage can help brand the news conference. If you wish to incorporate videos or PowerPoint presentations into the event, consider how this would look on television and, whenever possible, provide broadcast-quality copies of the video to news crews who attend.
- **Materials:** In preparation for the news conference, review all current documents and determine what needs to be developed for distribution to event attendees (e.g., press release, fact sheet, agenda and spokespeople's bios). It is also helpful to have a list of all speakers with the correct spelling of their names and titles, as well as State-specific information, prepared for easy reference by media in attendance.
- **Staffing:** Determine roles and responsibilities for members of your organization. Assign one to two staff to sign in reporters and guests as they enter the venue. A sign-in sheet allows your organization to keep track of who attends the event, aids in media follow-up efforts and in tracking media coverage.

- **Media Inquiries:** Reporters may have inquiries/requests to speak with spokespeople one-on-one immediately following the event. Be sure to alert the spokesperson in advance and determine whether his or her schedule will accommodate these requests.
- **Media Follow-Up:** Distribute a press release with key information unveiled at the news conference (see Sample B) immediately after the news conference. The press release should be sent to all members of the media invited to the event whether they attend in person or not.
- **Media Monitoring:** Monitor and keep track of news coverage generated from the news conference. Consider sharing coverage with key stakeholders, event speakers or other interested parties.
- **Thank You Note:** Prepare thank you notes for event speakers for their support in participating in the news conference. A senior-level person at your organization should sign the note.

## Promoting an Enrollment Event

As your organization hosts enrollment events in your community, you should work with the media to help drive attendance and cover the events while they are taking place. The following are suggestions to keep in mind when promoting a community event.

PROMOTING AN ENROLLMENT EVENT	
<b>Three Weeks Before the Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote event in community calendars. Put basic event information in calendars including local papers, TV stations, city calendars, etc. Be sure to have all parties involved in the event approve the information beforehand.</li> <li>• If working with a sponsor or partner organization(s), ensure your organization's staff is coordinating with their public relations staff. Get a commitment from partners to help promote the event and drive attendance.</li> <li>• Create a media advisory with information about the event.</li> <li>• Build a list of local media outlets to reach out to for help promoting your event.</li> </ul>
<b>Two Weeks Before the Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with partner organization(s) to designate an official spokesperson.</li> <li>• Pitch the event to local media outlets (community newspapers and magazines, local TV and radio stations, online publications). Distribute a media advisory. Make follow-up calls to secure both pre-event promotional interviews and media coverage at the event.</li> </ul>
<b>Week of the Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue following up with local media outlets to help promote your event. Confirm if they plan to attend.</li> <li>• Create a press release to distribute to the media the day of the event.</li> <li>• Assign a staff member to work with media at the event and answer any inquiries/field any requests for on-site interviews.</li> </ul>
<b>Day of the Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute a press release to your list of media outlets.</li> <li>• Keep track of which media outlets attend the event. Get their contact information so you may follow up with them about event coverage.</li> </ul>

<b>Week After the Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor media coverage from your event.</li> <li>• Send thank you letters to event speakers and community leaders in attendance.</li> </ul>
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## 4.4 Integrating Social Media

You may consider integrating social media into your program's outreach efforts. Social media are the various electronic tools, technologies and applications that facilitate interactive communication and content exchange. The potential for spreading information via social media is seemingly endless, but be strategic in your efforts. Nontraditional media allow you to interact with your audience in a neutral space – not just on your Web site or through your organization's publications – and can help you drive them to take action. Below are descriptions of popular social media tools:

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS	
Tool	Description
<b>Blogs</b>	Short for Weblog, a type of Web site you update frequently, is written in a conversational tone and contains regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events or other material
<b>Microblogs</b> (Twitter, Plurk, etc.)	Form of blogging that allows you to write brief text updates (usually 140 characters) and publish them to be viewed and commented upon by your network
<b>Podcasts</b>	Web-based audio and/or video content you make available for downloading to a personal audio player
<b>Social Networking Sites</b> (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)	Online communities that allow you to connect, interact and exchange information with those who share interests and/or activities
<b>Mobile Text Messaging</b>	Short messages you exchange between mobile devices
<b>Image/Video Sharing Sites</b> (Flickr, YouTube, etc.)	Sites with user-generated content that allow you to upload pictures or videos and view and comment on the uploaded content of others

## Engaging Bloggers

A blog is a Web site where information, insights and updates are provided on a regular basis. Many blogs provide news or commentary on a specific subject and include a feedback mechanism for readers to post comments.

Bloggers are becoming increasingly important sources of information for consumers – in part because they offer a distinct point-of-view with their reporting. However, engaging bloggers is different from reaching out to traditional media. That being said, you should include bloggers in your traditional media outreach activities, such as e-mailing them to promote upcoming enrollment events or when you release a media statement. By including bloggers in these traditional media activities, you signal to bloggers you consider them a credible, substantive news source. Also, bloggers work to build

connections with their readers, so your approach must be more personal. Consider ways to insert your information into the conversation currently being conducted.

Before reaching out to bloggers, review the following tips:

WAYS TO ENGAGE BLOGGERS	
<b>Monitor the Blogosphere</b>	<p>See what information is available on the Web that discusses children’s health insurance. To do this, you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set-up Google alerts – free e-mail alerts that can monitor both news about your organization and blogs that discuss children’s health insurance issues.</li> <li>• Review blogs your organization currently monitors to find other blogs mentioned in their posts.</li> </ul>
<b>Develop a Media List of Key Bloggers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform a Google search for family, parenting and health bloggers to develop a list of leaders in the field.</li> <li>• Create a list of local bloggers you want to conduct outreach to about upcoming news and events. In your list, include the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Name of blogger, media outlet/name of blog, contact information (phone, e-mail address, fax number if available).</li> <li>- Notes section to include information about past blog entries and preferred method of contact.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Respond to Blog Posts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a conversation is happening where you can add new information, post a comment on the blog site.</li> <li>• If you identify factually incorrect information a blogger has posted by accident, you should offer a correction. Source your information whenever possible to provide third-party validation of your correction.</li> <li>• When approaching bloggers who are posting what you consider negative information, send a note to the blogger rather than posting directly into a conversation. This outreach should be neutral in tone, correct any misinformation and give a contact person for future questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Conduct Proactive Blog Outreach</b>	<p>Build a permanent relationship with key bloggers on your media list. When available, have your organization’s spokesperson conduct outreach to top bloggers. This shows your organization is serious about interacting with bloggers and allows the bloggers to report they got information directly from you.</p>

## Microblogs

Twitter and other microblogs are an effective means of sharing information with a large audience in real time. With a 140-character limit, microblogs are most effective for sharing links to articles, photos and brief updates. When using a service like Twitter, be sure to consider your audience. Reporters, partner advocates and bloggers are all good audiences for tweets, a 140-character message on Twitter, while parents and other audiences might not have the same access. Your organization can use tools like Twitter in the following ways:





- Sharing links to articles about CHIP and Medicaid published by local media outlets
- Re-tweeting any children's health insurance tweets created and approved by CMS or HHS
- Directing people to your Web site or Facebook page for news and program updates

To set up a Twitter account, visit <https://twitter.com/signup> and follow the instructions. Someone on staff should be assigned to maintain the Twitter account, post to it, re-tweet and respond to tweets related to children's health insurance or your organization. To re-tweet messages created by CMS or HHS, copy the content of the tweet and put an RT (for "re-tweet") @TwitterHandle before the content.

## Podcasts

A podcast is a digital media file, either audio or video, available on the Internet for downloading to a media player or personal computer. To create a podcast, you should work with your organization's Webmaster, if one is available, and follow these steps:

1. Create a podcast by taking a TV or radio interview or news conference and uploading it onto a third-party server. A quick search on the Web will turn up a variety of different servers, both free and those that require a fee.
2. Get a Real Simple Syndication (RSS) code. Once you upload your podcast onto the third-party server, you need to obtain your RSS code. This is the code you will give to a server, such as iTunes, in order to review your podcast and make it available for download. Your third-party server will most likely give you the RSS code on your log-in page. Copy it verbatim.
3. Apply your podcast to a server, such as iTunes. Open iTunes on your computer. Go to the iTunes store and click on "Podcasts." Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on "Submit a podcast." A screen will pop up that will ask for your RSS feed code. Enter it exactly as it was given to you on your third-party server, and click "Continue."
4. Wait for approval. Unfortunately, the staff on a server may have hundreds of new podcasts to approve every week, so it will take two or three weeks before you find out if your podcast is approved. Once it is, you can update it as often as you like via your third-party server.

Your organization can also repurpose any podcasts created by CMS and HHS by downloading them and placing them on your Web site or Facebook page. You can also link to available podcasts via Twitter.

## Social Networking Sites

Utilizing social networking sites, such as Facebook, is another way to build support for your children's health insurance efforts. You can set-up a profile, a fan page or a cause page and invite people to be your friend/fan or join your cause. To do this, you will first need to create a Facebook profile by visiting [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). On the Web site, there is an option to create a page for a celebrity, band or business. Click on that option, and you will be taken to this page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>. Once the page is created, it is important that someone be assigned to maintain the page, recruit fans, post enrollment event photos and other content.



To direct people to your Facebook fan page:

- Post “Follow Us” and “Share” links on your Web site and any applicable program-specific Web sites.
- Include the Facebook link on your organization’s Web site and in your media materials.
- Cross-promote with each of your partners on Facebook, letting friends or fans know about upcoming education and enrollment events each is hosting.

### **Link to HHS New Media**

As HHS develops social media content, there are various ways for your organization to effectively use it. You can post the content to your Web site, include past Twitter updates in weekly e-newsletters or post HHS-approved messaging to your Facebook page.

## 4.5 Sample Materials

### Sample A – Sample Media List

Name	Title	Outlet	Phone	E-mail	Fax	Notes
<b>Print</b>						
Joseph Frank	Health Care Reporter	The Daily Post	646-555-1122	<a href="mailto:Joseph.Frank@dailypost.com">Joseph.Frank@dailypost.com</a>	646-555-1212	Wrote recent story about children's health insurance
Bob Smith	Lifestyle Editor	The Daily Post	646-555-1412	<a href="mailto:Bob.Smith@dailypost.com">Bob.Smith@dailypost.com</a>	646-555-1212	Contact through e-mail only
<b>Radio</b>						
Ann Taylor	News Director	WHHS-AM	515-555-0021	<a href="mailto:ataylor@whhs.com">ataylor@whhs.com</a>	515-555-0023	Station hosts health care program
Greg Thomas	Public Service Director	WHHS-AM	515-555-0022	<a href="mailto:gthomas@whhs.com">gthomas@whhs.com</a>	515-555-0023	Read PSA script last month
<b>Television</b>						
Sue Harris	Assignment Desk Editor	QRST-TV	646-555-1234	<a href="mailto:sharris@qrst.com">sharris@qrst.com</a>	646-555-0000	Fax media advisories and media releases
Beth Jones	Health Care Reporter	QRST-TV	646-555-1235	<a href="mailto:bjones@qrst.com">bjones@qrst.com</a>	646-555-0000	Attended enrollment event in May



InsureKidsNow.gov

## Sample B – Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [MEDIA CONTACT]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

### **[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] HOSTS EVENT TO ASSIST FAMILIES IN APPLYING FOR LOW-COST HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THEIR KIDS**

[DATE] [CITY, STATE] – XX in 10 families in [INSERT CITY/STATE] qualify for [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME], the State health insurance program for kids, and don't know it. To help reduce the thousands of children in [INSERT CITY/STATE] who are without health insurance, [INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION] is hosting an enrollment event on [INSERT DATE] at [INSERT LOCATION]. At the event, families can determine if they are eligible for low-cost children's health insurance, learn about the benefits of coverage and get assistance with enrollment.

"We know children with health insurance are more likely to get preventive care, receive treatment for chronic illness and take prescription medications," said [INSERT NAME AND TITLE]. "Even if a family has been turned down in the past, we encourage them to come to the event, call or go online. The program has changed and their situation may have too."

There are many reasons children may not have health insurance – a parent or guardian lost a job, does not have health insurance at work or feels enrolling in health insurance would be a financial strain. Oftentimes, parents think they cannot get health insurance coverage for their kids because they make too much money. In fact, a family of four making up to [INSERT CAP] may still be eligible for [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].

[INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME] covers much more than urgent health needs. Children enrolled in the program can get regular check-ups, dental care, immunizations and prescription drugs.

"Enrolling eligible kids into the [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME] is a benefit for the entire community," said [INSERT NAME AND TITLE]. "With healthier children and families, we are a stronger, better community."

Parents and guardians can contact the [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME] office at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER AND/OR WEB SITE] for details about eligibility requirements. Income will help determine the cost of coverage. Applying can be done online, in the mail or over the phone, without having to take time off work.

[INSERT BOILERPLATE ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION]

###

## Sample C – Media Advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY  
[DATE OF RELEASE]

CONTACT: [NAME]  
[PHONE NUMBERS]

### **[NAME OF ORGANIZATION/COALITION] SPONSORS [NAME OF EVENT] TO EDUCATE, ENROLL FAMILIES AND THEIR CHILDREN IN [INSERT STATE PROGRAM NAME]**

**WHO:** [NAME OF ORGANIZATION/COALITION] is hosting [NAME OF EVENT] to educate and help families and their children enroll in the [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].

**WHAT:** Thousands of families in [NAME OF COMMUNITY] are eligible for low-cost health insurance for their uninsured children and don't even know it. To help educate local families about [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM], [NAME OF ORGANIZATION/COALITION] is hosting education and enrollment events throughout the community. These events will offer local families the opportunity to get information about eligibility requirements for [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM], to receive assistance with applying for children's health insurance and to learn about the benefits of coverage, which include regular check-ups, dental care, immunizations and prescription drugs.

**WHEN:** [DAY OF THE WEEK, DATE OF THE EVENT, TIME OF EVENT]

**WHERE:** [NAME OF EVENT, SPONSORING ORGANIZATION(S)]  
[ADDRESS LINE 1]  
[ADDRESS LINE 2]  
[PHONE NUMBER OF LOCATION]

**BACKGROUND:**  
[INSERT BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAMS]

[INSERT BOILERPLATE ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION]

###



## Sample D – Pitch Script

Hello, my name is [INSERT YOUR NAME], and I am calling from [INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION]. Do you have a moment? [If yes, begin your pitch. If no, ask when would be a better time to follow-up.]

There are currently [INSERT LOCAL STATISTICS] children in [INSERT COMMUNITY] without health insurance. But we're holding an event to try to reduce that number.

On [DATE OF EVENT] at [EVENT LOCATION], [INSERT NAME OF SPONSORING ORGANIZATION] is holding an event to assist parents and guardians with [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] enrollment and to answer any questions they have about the program.

We know that many families who are eligible for coverage don't even know it. Parents and guardians think they cannot get health insurance coverage for their kids because they make too much money. However, in [INSERT STATE] a family of four making up to [INSERT CAP] may still be eligible for [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].

We are committed to ensuring that families who are eligible for these programs get covered.

Would you be interested in covering this upcoming event? I will e-mail you a media advisory with all the event details. [If yes, ask the following question.] Can I answer any additional questions about our event? [If no, ask the following question.] Would you be interested in setting up an interview with our spokesperson?

[If leaving a voicemail for a reporter, provide your name and number and repeat it slowly.]



## Sample E – Drop-In Article

### **Many Families, Their Kids Are Eligible for Low-Cost Health Insurance Coverage and Don't Even Know It**

Most parents would do whatever it takes to help their child thrive and succeed in life, but are [INSERT COMMUNITY]'s children falling behind in the fight to stay healthy? Each year, thousands of children in the United States go without health insurance. Families across the country are eligible for children's health insurance programs, which provide low-cost health insurance for their kids, but many don't even know it.

There are many reasons a child might not have health insurance – a parent or guardian lost a job, they don't have health insurance at work or the cost of insurance is simply out of reach. Whatever the reason, [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] may be able to help, even if a family has been turned down in the past.

The [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] is urging families to get their uninsured children covered and keep them covered by doing three things:

**Check...**to see what low-cost health insurance is available. Just start with a call to [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] or visit [INSERT WEB SITE].

**Protect...**children with regular check-ups, dental care, immunizations and prescription drugs, which are all available to children enrolled in a children's health insurance program. Parents also gain peace of mind knowing they have coverage when they need it.

**Expect...**to re-enroll every year. Keeping [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] coverage means keeping children healthy, but coverage must be renewed each year. Mark the calendar for the month coverage began so you are ready when the [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] contacts you.

Research indicates children with health insurance are more likely to get preventive care, receive treatment for chronic illness and take prescription medications. Children with health insurance are less likely to miss school because they are sick. It boosts their performance in the classroom and means fewer lost work days for their parents or guardians. Oftentimes, families think they cannot get health insurance coverage for their kids because they make too much money. However, in [INSERT STATE] a family of four making up to [INSERT CAP] may still be eligible for [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].

Applying for [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] can be done online, in the mail or over the phone, without having to take time off work. It is easy to see if your family is eligible, just call [INSERT PHONE NUMBER].





## Sample F – Drop-In Article (Spanish)

### **Muchas familias y sus hijos son elegibles para tener seguro de salud a bajo costo, pero ni siquiera lo saben**

Los padres están dispuestos a hacer todo lo posible para ayudar a sus hijos a progresar y tener éxito en la vida. Pero ¿acaso los niños de [INSERT COMMUNITY] se están quedando atrás en la lucha por mantenerse saludables? Cada año, miles de niños en los Estados Unidos viven sin seguro de salud. Y aunque las familias de toda la nación son elegibles para beneficiarse con programas de seguro de salud de bajo costo para sus hijos, muchas ni siquiera lo saben.

Existen muchas razones por las cuales un niño puede carecer de seguro de salud: su padre, madre o tutor perdió su empleo, o no tiene seguro médico en su centro de trabajo, o simplemente el pago de un seguro de salud no está a su alcance. Pero independientemente de las razones, [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] puede ayudar, incluso si la familia ha sido rechazada anteriormente.

El [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] está exhortando a las familias a que les den cobertura a sus hijos sin seguro, y a mantenerlos con seguros de salud, tomando tres medidas:

**Buscar...** para determinar cuál seguro de salud a bajo costo está disponible. Sólo tiene que comenzar con una llamada a [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] al [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] o visitarnos en el sitio Web [INSERT WEB SITE].

**Proteger...** a los niños con chequeos regulares, atención dental, vacunas y medicamentos bajo receta, todos disponibles para los niños inscritos en un programa de seguro de salud. Los padres también pueden tener tranquilidad sabiendo que disponen de cobertura cuando la necesitan, y de control sobre los médicos que atienden al niño.

**Esperar...** cada año por la fecha precisa para renovar la inscripción. Mantener la cobertura de [INSERT WEB SITE] equivale a garantizar la salud del niño, pero hay que renovar esa cobertura todos los años. Marque en su calendario el mes en que comenzó la cobertura, para estar listo cuando [INSERT WEB SITE] se ponga en contacto con usted.

Varios estudios indican que los niños que tienen seguro de salud son más propensos a beneficiarse con medicina preventiva, tratamiento de enfermedades crónicas y medicamentos bajo receta. Los niños que tienen seguro de salud faltan menos a la escuela por enfermedad. Esto estimula su rendimiento en el aula, y además garantiza menos días laborables perdidos por sus padres o tutores. Con frecuencia, los padres creen que no pueden obtener cobertura de seguro de salud para sus hijos, porque sus ingresos son demasiado altos. Sin embargo, en [INSERT STATE] una familia de cuatro integrantes con ingresos de hasta [INSERT CAP] puede ser elegible para beneficiarse con [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].



La solicitud para inscribirse en [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] se puede hacer por Internet, correo postal o por teléfono, sin necesidad de perder horas de trabajo. Es fácil determinar si su familia es elegible. Sólo tiene que llamar al [INSERT PHONE NUMBER].

## Sample G – Letter to the Editor

[DATE OF SUBMISSION]

[NAME OF PUBLICATION]

[ADDRESS OF PUBLICATION]

Dear Editor:

Each year, thousands of children in [INSERT COMMUNITY] go without health insurance, but local parents and guardians should know they don't have to. [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] provides eligible families with low-cost health insurance coverage for their children.

Oftentimes, families think they cannot get health insurance coverage for their kids because they make too much money. However, in [INSERT STATE] a family of four making up to [INSERT CAP] may still be eligible for [INSERT STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM NAME].

[NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] covers much more than urgent health needs. Kids enrolled in children's health insurance programs can get regular check-ups, dental care, immunizations and prescription drugs. Research indicates children with health insurance are more likely to get preventive care, receive treatment for chronic illness and take prescription medications, keeping them healthy.

Most parents and guardians will do whatever it takes to help their child get ahead. They can call the [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] office at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER AND/OR WEB SITE] to find out if they are eligible for low-cost health insurance and learn how to enroll.

Families want to keep their kids healthy. A quick call can do just that and give families peace of mind.

Sincerely,

[PRINT NAME]

[SIGNATURE]

[E-MAIL ADDRESS]

[PHONE NUMBER]

## Sample H – Letter to the Editor (Spanish)

[DATE OF SUBMISSION]

[NAME OF PUBLICATION]

[ADDRESS OF PUBLICATION]

Estimado(a) editor (a):

Cada año, miles de niños en [INSERT COMMUNITY] carecen de seguro de salud, pero los padres y tutores deben saber que este problema se puede solucionar. [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] les proporciona a las familias elegibles cobertura de seguro de salud a bajo costo para sus hijos.

Con frecuencia, los padres creen que no pueden obtener cobertura de seguro de salud para sus hijos, porque sus ingresos son demasiado altos. Sin embargo, en [INSERT STATE] una familia de cuatro integrantes con ingresos de hasta [INSERT CAP] puede ser elegible para beneficiarse con [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM].

[NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] es mucho más que una cobertura de necesidades urgentes. Los niños inscritos en los programas de seguro de salud pueden recibir chequeos regulares, atención dental, vacunas y medicamentos bajo receta. Varios estudios indican que los niños que tienen seguro de salud son más propensos a beneficiarse con medicina preventiva, tratamiento de enfermedades crónicas y medicamentos bajo receta, lo que les permite mantenerse saludables.

Los padres están dispuestos a hacer todo lo necesario para ayudar a que sus hijos triunfen en la vida. De inmediato, pueden llamar a la oficina de [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] al [INSERT PHONE NUMBER AND/OR WEB SITE] y determinar si son elegibles para recibir seguro de salud a bajo costo, y conocer los pasos que deben seguir para inscribirse.

Usted desea mantener saludables a sus hijos. Una llamada rápida puede ayudarle a lograrlo, y darle tranquilidad.

Cordialmente,

[PRINT NAME]

[SIGNATURE]

[E-MAIL ADDRESS]

[PHONE NUMBER]

## Sample I – Media Statement

**Media Statement**

**Contact:** [CONTACT'S NAME]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

### **STATEMENT FROM [INSERT SPOKESPERSON AND ORGANIZATION NAME] ABOUT NEW ENROLLMENT IN [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM]**

The report released today by [INSERT DETAILS] shows there are [INSERT LOCAL STATISTICS ON ENROLLMENT] children enrolled in [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM], the State's children's health insurance program, up [INSERT PERCENTAGE] from 2008. These numbers show a trend in the right direction, but with tough economic times, we know there continue to be eligible children in [INSERT STATE] who are not enrolled.

Children with health insurance are more likely to get preventive care, receive treatment for chronic illness and take prescription medications. We want to keep [INSERT STATE]'s children healthy. We encourage parents and guardians of uninsured children to contact the [NAME OF STATE CHIP/MEDICAID PROGRAM] office at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER AND/OR WEB SITE] to see if their child is eligible for low-cost coverage and learn about the benefits of children's health insurance.

###